O's Place Jazz Magazine
Review

Date: Dec. 7, 2009

Lee McClure Ensemble
CD: *A Jazz Christmas Like You've Never Heard*

This Holiday album lives up to it's billing. Traditional? NOT! It is truly a unique approach with the band exploding through classic spirited bebop arrangements with vocalist Margaret Dorn soaring on improvised vocals on top. McClure conducts the assemblage of Chris Hunter (sax, fl), Ratzo Harris (b), Tony Moreno (d) and Bob Albanese (p, organ).

The music is great and the lyrics are familiar but the combination takes some getting use to! By the third track you are either hooked or possibly offended. For sure Lee has managed to transform, twist and provoke our imaginations with this work. They open with perhaps the jazziest "Silent Night" we've heard and wrap with a more peaceful version of "O Holy Night". In between there are eight mostly upbeat selections highlighted by "Samba Gospel" and "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen." This is a not your traditional Holiday album.

D. Oscar Groomes

O's Place Jazz Magazine
P.O. Box 38430
Charlotte, NC 28278
http://www.OsPlaceJazz.com

– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

The album reviewed above came be heard at:

https://leemcclure.bandcamp.com/album/a-jazz-christmas-like-youve-never-heard